

Exchange Bank and Recorder's Office  
Southeast corner of South Pass Avenue and  
Price Street  
South Pass City  
Fremont County  
Wyoming

HABS No. WYO-36

HABS  
WYO,  
7-SOPAC,  
9-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20005

## EXCHANGE BANK AND RECORDER'S OFFICE

HABS  
WYO,  
7-SOPAC,  
9-

Location: Southeast corner of South Pass Avenue and Price Street,  
South Pass City, Fremont County, Wyoming.  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: (USGS South  
Pass City Quadrangle Map) 12.680840.470288.

Present Owner: State of Wyoming.

Present Occupant: None.

Present Use: Restored as an example of Western vernacular architecture.

Statement of  
Significance: One of South Pass City's two original banks. The Recorder's  
Office, adjacent to the Exchange Bank, was the meeting  
place of the county commissioners first of Carter County  
and later of Sweetwater County.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1868.
2. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description of property:  
The bank occupies Lot 98 in South Pass City, Fremont County,  
Wyoming.

(Note: For further information on land ownership in South Pass City see the HABS Report on South Pass City, WYO-27.) South Pass City was originally platted in 1867. This plat was lost and apparently another plat was drawn in 1870. The Territory of Wyoming was formed in 1869 and Carter County was renamed Sweetwater County. The county seat shifted between South Pass City and Green River from 1873 to 1875. There were a great many multiple claims to properties in South Pass City as a result of the loss of the original plat. This situation was further complicated by loss of several land record books. Today the land records for this early period may be found in Green River at the Sweetwater County Courthouse, at the State Museum in Cheyenne, and at the Western History Research Center at the University of Wyoming Library at Laramie. The Wyoming Recreation Commission has abstracted the chain of title as follows:

J. W. Iliff 1868-1875  
Sherlock Family 1875-1949  
Fred Stratton, Sr. 1949-1955  
Mr. and Mrs. John Woodring 1955-1966  
Wyoming 75th Anniversary Commission 1966-1967  
Old South Pass Historical Preserve 1967-1969  
Wyoming Recreation Commission 1969-present

3. Alterations and additions: About 1890 the bank building was converted into a saloon and the Recorder's Office was turned into a room for card players. An opening designed to connect these two buildings was placed in their common wall.

In 1973 these structures had decayed to such an extent that the Wyoming Recreation Commission had them dismantled and completely rebuilt. Most of the structural members were in such bad shape that they had to be replaced at that time.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The Exchange Bank was built in 1868 and owned by J. W. Iliff. Amos Steck operated the bank until it ceased to function in 1870. During the time of its operation the bank exchanged gold brought in by miners for money and shipped the gold to New York City. The Sherlock family purchased the Exchange Bank in 1875 and converted it, in 1890, into a saloon.

The Recorder's Office was constructed at the same time as the Exchange Bank, 1868. It functioned not only as the County Recorder's Office, but also as offices for a real estate agency, a lawyer, a sign painter, and possibly Wells Fargo. On April 11, 1868 the Carter County Commissioners established the Recorder's Office as the place for their meetings. When the county seat moved to Green River, Wyoming, in 1875 the building was vacated. When the Exchange Bank became a saloon in 1890, the Recorder's Office was connected to it and was used for card players.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: Photographic file, Wyoming Recreation Commission, Cheyenne, Wyoming.
2. Bibliography:
  - a. Primary and unpublished sources:

Shaffer, Thomas, planner for the Wyoming Recreation Commission; interview in Cheyenne, Wyoming on June 19, 1973.

Trevor, Marjorie C., "History of Carter-Sweetwater County, Wyoming to 1875." Master's thesis, University of Wyoming, 1954.

b. Secondary and published sources:

Hunt, Lester C. Wyoming: A Guide to its History, Highways, and People. New York: Oxford University Press, 1941.

Muths, Thomas. Restoration Master Plan, South Pass City, Wyoming. Jackson, Wyoming: Design Associates, 1972.

Prepared by John Paige  
Project Historian  
National Park Service  
Summer, 1973

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: One-story log and frame structures sharing a common wall. The Recorder's Office has a modest false front. The Exchange Bank has its gable end facing the street.
2. Condition of fabric: Recently restored.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Foundations: Stone.
2. Wall construction, finish and color: The street facade of The Exchange Bank has wooden clapboards while that of the Recorder's Office has flush boards, alternating wide and narrow. Side and rear walls appear to be composed of hewn logs with clay chinking.
3. Structural system, framing: Log bearing wall.
4. Porches: A wooden side walk abuts the front of the building.
5. Chimneys: There is a chimney at the rear (west) of the Exchange Bank.

6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: A double door with a three-paned glass transom leads into the Exchange Bank. Each leaf has eight panes of glass above a small wooden panel. A single four-panel wooden door leads into the Recorder's Office.
- b. Windows: The Exchange has two windows, one on each side of the door. The sashes are fixed, and have three lights horizontally and four vertically. The Recorder's Office has one window to the right of the door. This window has a double-hung sash with six-over-six lights.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape: The Exchange Bank has a gable roof; the Recorder's Office has a shed roof.
- b. Eaves: Simple and undecorated.

D. Site:

- 1. General setting and orientation: The Exchange Bank and Recorder's Office face north. These two buildings are located on the southeast corner of South Pass Avenue and Price Street.

Prepared by Candace Reed  
Architectural Historian  
National Park Service  
Spring, 1977

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were made during the 1973 Wyoming Project undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the Wyoming Recreation Commission. During the project, records were made on twenty-eight (28) individual subjects and six (6) historic areas.

This project was under the general supervision of John Poppeliers, chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey. Project Supervisor was Professor J. William Rudd, Architect, of the University of Cincinnati. Project Historian was John Paige, Oklahoma State University. The measured drawings were prepared by John Uhlir, University of California at Berkeley, Architect; and Student Assistant Architects Richard Duflocq, University of Cincinnati, Clayton Fraser, University of Tennessee, and Richard Wyatt, California Polytechnic University at San Luis Obispo. Jack E. Boucher, HABS staff photographer, provided the photographic record. This report was edited for HABS in 1977 by Candace Reed.

**ADDENDUM TO:**

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South Pass City  
Freemont County  
Wyoming

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**HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY**

National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20001